

Summary of the Eid al-Adha Sermon Delivered By Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad - Khalifatul Masih IV, On 18th April 1997 in Islamabad, Tilford - United Kingdom

'My Lord! Grace me with righteous ones.'

So We gave him the tidings of a gentle son.

When he was old enough to run about with him he said 'O my dear son! I have seen in a dream that I am slaughtering thee. So what do you think?' He replied 'O my father! Do as thou art commanded; thou wilt find me if Allah please of the forbearing.'

Then when they both submitted and he laid him *on the ground* face down.

We called to him 'O Abraham!

'Thou hast indeed fulfilled the dream.' Thus indeed do We reward those who do good.

That was indeed a grand test.

Then We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice.

And We let him be praised by succeeding generations -

'Peace be upon Abraham!'

Thus do We reward those who do good.

Surely he was one of Our faithful servants.

The Holy Quran. al-Saffat [The Rows]: 101 - 112.

These verses explain the philosophy of the fulfilment of prayers and its requirements and the duties pertaining to the prayers once they are fulfilled. With reference to the prayer of رَبِّ هَبْ [لِي مِن الصَّالِحِينَ] ['My Lord! Grace me with righteous ones'] the fulfilment of prayers is not dependent just upon its words but upon the depth, sincerity and helplessness and total giving up of oneself with which the prayer is supplicated and the way in which it is fulfilled and then the responsibility does not end with a devoted prayer for their fulfilment is followed by continually striving which is mentioned as the sign of its fulfilment so in this relation this prayer is a lamp upon the path for us as it was at the time of the Prophet Abraham (peace be on him) or before or after it but pondering upon these verses also teaches us the subtle rules of moral upbringing and we can also learn as to how long the period of our striving and moral upbringing is to last. I also draw attention to the responsibilities concerning the *Waqifin e Nau* [Child Devotees] with reference to these verses. In فَبَشِّرْنَاهُ بِعَلَامٍ حَلِيمٍ ['So We gave him the tidings of a gentle son'] the word حَلِيمٍ also reveals the mannerisms of the prayers of the Prophet Abraham because a 'gentle' son who is very forbearing and courageous. Not impatient but one who bears troubles with great bravery and clemency. In this relation the gentle manners of Hazrat Musleh Maud (Allah be pleased with him) are also in fulfilment of the words of the Prophecy concerning Hazrat Musleh Maud that 'He would be meek of heart'¹

These verses highlight certain aspects of the sacrifices of the Prophet Abraham and the Prophet Ishmael (peace be on them) in a very appealing manner which shows how the endeavour revealed to the Prophet Abraham in a dream was fulfilled.

¹ Ahmad, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam. Announcement of 20th February 1886. *Majmua Ishtiharat*: i. 101.

The fountain that flowed forth where the Prophet Ishmael (peace be on him) rubbed his heels became the water of life for his sake with the grace of Allah the Almighty as well as for many a nation, it became a life-giving water for many a convoy, apparently it was physical water but it flowed from beneath his feet and this water drew the convoys and came to exist in the same glory in its spiritual fulfilment.

So the prayer of رَبْ هُبْ لِي مِن الصَّالِحِينَ is apparently a common prayer that 'O my Lord! Grace me with the righteous' but there is a difference between one righteousness and another. There is a difference between one righteous seeker and another righteous seeker. Nobody had seen such a theophany of the acceptance of prayer before this in the history of the world.

كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ [Thus do We reward those who do good.] This is a theme that possesses astonishing subtleties because people think that the rewards of kindness are just the graces of a higher order. **Those pertaining to a higher kindness are rewarded with the offering of sacrifices in turn. The more favourable one is the greater would be their reward and the greatest of rewards is the granting of the ability to offer sacrifice.** Thus it was this same prayer that the Prophet Abraham (peace be on him) asked for himself:

Our Lord! Make us submissive to thee and of our offspring a people submissive to thee. And show us the ways of our worship and turn to us; for Thou art Oft-Returning, Merciful.²

O our Lord! Show us the places of sacrifice and also teach us how to present the sacrifices before you.

وَذَيْنَا مُذْبَحٌ عَظِيمٌ [Then We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice.] The sheep or ram that was stuck in the hedges was not a momentous sacrifice. What was its worth before the Prophet Ishmael that it should be called a momentous sacrifice? So here the era of the sacrifices of Muhammad ﷺ the Holy Messenger of Allah is meant which is a very grand era of sacrifices in which dozens and thousands till Doomsday in fact among the generations to follow tens of thousands and tens of millions of people would offer their necks like the Prophet Ishmael did and their necks would be accepted and the reward of the favourable is also that the Prophet Abraham (peace be on him) agreed to sacrifice one son and then Allah the Almighty let a continuation of sacrifices from him till Doomsday:

And We let him be praised by succeeding generations -
'Peace be upon Abraham!'

That is the reward which is perfect. Until Doomsday and until people would continue to sacrifice what is dear to them the lives dearer to them than their own selves and their people and those associated with them, until then would Abraham would be conveyed their greetings of peace. Today when hundreds of thousands of people gather from around the world at the time of the *Hajj* they invoke salutations upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and in doing so also invoke salutations upon Abraham (peace be on him).

So today when we offer our offspring and children before God or are offering our lives they should be offered up with the same intention and the same devotion with which Abraham (peace be on him) had offered prayers and offered up his future generations. Muhammad

² *The Holy Quran.* al-Baqarah [The Heifer]: 129.

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was chosen as the ascent of his prayers upon the same pathways and reached such lofty heights, as could never even have been imagined by the Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) that *I would be granted a Prophet of such grandeur.*

Whenever you invoke the salutations today and whenever the Muslims invoke salutations tomorrow and would go on invoking them and ever since the salutations began the greetings of peace upon Abraham's name has always been included in the invocations and this peace continues to this day as it would be tomorrow and as time passes those people who would be sending peace upon Abraham would become innumerable.

Ask of God alone for the purification and cleansing of your prayers and for the ability to shape your offspring in accord with these prayers. Do not just offer prayers but also offer prayers for your prayers to be pious ones and for the prayers to be pure ones.

So I hope that God would enable us to reach the position of such humility that it would result in His making us understand how to pray and what to pray for, that He Himself would enable us to offer sacrifices as a result of these prayers. That He Himself would accept these sacrifices and their reward would be so great that we cannot even imagine it in our wildest fantasies, we would pass away from this world but the fruit of our sacrifices would be consumed by the future generations for ever and for ever. May Allah the Almighty enable us to sacrifice our lives, our possessions, our time, our honour and our offspring before God in this manner.